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Man from Bokhara wearing a chalat made according to the ikat technique. The threads are dyed before weaving.

286 ones which are made in Ferghana (see ill.
294 below) and the neighbouring districts of Eastern Turkestan are not nearly so rich and so vivid as Indian and Indonesian ikat patterns.
386 With the exception of indigo, which was imported from India, all the dyestuffs used in

386

Turkestan were of native origin. Madder (Rubia tinctorum) grew wild, and was also cultivated. The plants on which the kermes shield-louse feeds (see Ciba Review No. 7, page 206) also grow in many parts of the country as well as in neighbouring Persia. In the steppes the flowers of "esparuk" (Delphinium sulphureum), the infusion of which yields a strong yellow of sulphur shade, were gathered in large quantities. Another yellow dye was extracted from the blossoms of Sophora japonica (known to the natives as "tukmak"). Safflor (Carthamus tinctorius), "maksar" in the vernacular, a third plant for yellow dyes, also

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386 grows in Turkestan. Green was produced by mixing indigo with a yellow.

These dyes were the most important ones, being used almost exclusively in the dyeing of dress materials, and the people of Turkestan were fully aware of their economic significance for the textile crafts. It is, therefore, not impossible that the Khan of Khokand forbade imports of artificial dyestuffs because his revenues were directly or indirectly bound up with the production of native dyestuffs, a fact which gave him reason to fear that the introduction of the new dyes would bring about a decrease of his income.

287 number from 420 to 450 knots to the square inch, and some times even more than that. The knot is usually the Persian Sennah knot; the Turkish Ghiordes knot occurs in exceptional cases only (cf. Ciba Review No. 15). The material used is the wool of camels, sheep, and goats. The strong knee-hair of the camel serves as material for the warp-threads. For the knot-thread the soft under-wool which goats and camels grow in the cold season is used. Unlike the camels of other Oriental countries the heavy beasts of burden in Turkestan, the so-called Bactrian camels, have an exceedingly thick coat of hair, which covers their bodies in thick tufts during the winter months. Cotton is never used in the making of Turkoman rugs, and silk only very rarely, usually in making small knotted bags from the region of Merv and Punjdeh, and then only for a few details of the pattern.

The treatment of the wool used in knotting rugs has been brought to great perfection in the course of a long tradition. Washing, which is done in running water, is of great importance. It is very difficult to remove all the grease from the fibre, and if that is not done there is danger of maggots finding their way into the pile and destroying it.

386 The same care and skill are devoted to the dyeing of the wool. As elsewhere in the East the important red dye was extracted from the root of the madder-plant (known in the vernacular as rujan) or from the kermes shield-louse. Madder grew wild throughout Turkestan, and

386 was also cultivated. Blue was achieved by means of indigo, which had to be brought from India, and for that reason it is rarely found in Turkoman rugs. Black was usually extracted from the gall-nuts of the pistachio (known as busgunch) and from pomegranate skins. Sometimes mate-

287 *Pattern in knot-technique as used by the Yomud Turkomans. Lozenges and rows of hooks are distributed over the background.*

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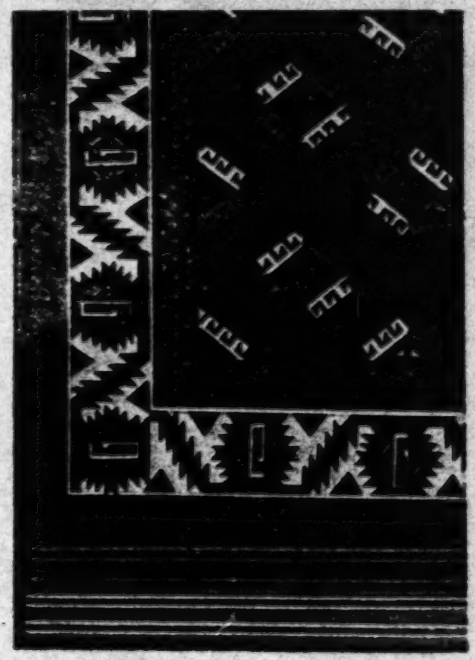

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386 rials such as pyrites were used, which had the effect of corroding the wool, so that the black parts of many otherwise good rugs give the impression of having been eaten away. In spite of the limited selection of colours the shades and the number of combinations are surprisingly varied. The Turkomans are good observers, and were not slow in making use of the fact that the colours varied with the time of the year at which the plants were gathered, or with the length of time during which they were allowed to boil, to ferment, or to be exposed to the rays of the sun. For that reason the simplicity which characterizes these rugs is never monotonous. Both technically and artistically they are the perfect expression of that form of life which ethnologists describe as nomadic. They fulfil all the requirements of daily use, and the patterns are designed and perpetuated by skilled workers of a tribe, whose members all live under precisely the same geographical and social conditions.

287 531

287 352 These connections between the knotting technique and nomad life are so striking that one feels tempted to regard the craft as an invention of wandering tribes. For the town-dwellers of Persia and India, of Egypt and Asia Minor, who developed the craft of carpet-knotting into an art, the necessity to use such light and easily transportable »textile furniture« is not nearly so great, and it is but natural that they should have adopted the